

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the present application with the following listing of claims:

Listing of Claims:

1-23. (Canceled)

24. (New) Apparatus support structure for container handling machines, comprising:

entry and exit stars, each entry and exit star being arranged on a support housing and drivable via at least one drive from the inside of the support housing,

a star configuration of the apparatus support structure being defined by the relative positioning of the entry and exit stars,

the support housings being within the star configuration and fixed above a floor plane and beneath a transport plane in the apparatus support structure which stands on the floor,

the apparatus support structure being one of a pipe or profile frame with sections and substantially horizontal and defining a fixation plane,

the sections of the pipe frame being one of stainless steel pipes or round solid profiled parts,

the sections of the profile frame being profiled parts whose bottoms are open, and whose surfaces pointing away from the floor plane are one of curved or flat and slanted towards the floor plane,

each section presenting at least one joining end which fits with a connection interface of one of a support housing or of a floor foot,

the sections being connected to each other at nodes by one of directly or via a support housing or a floor foot located at a node,

wherein on the floor feet the support housings stand freely with the sections arranged in such a manner that open areas are formed between sections around the support housings, and

at least some sections can be combined with each other and with support housings whereby the start configuration is changeable as desired.

25. (New) Apparatus support structure according to claim 24, wherein in addition to entry and exit stars, at least one additional container handling component comprising one of a closing device, an inspection device, or a labeling machine, is fixed at a node of the pipe or profile frame.

26. (New) Apparatus support structure according to claim 24, wherein in addition to the entry and exit stars, at least one additional container handling component comprising one of a conveyor or a splash removing device is fixed on a section and/or in the vicinity of a node of the pipe or profile frame.

27. (New) Apparatus support structure according to claim 24, wherein entry and exit stars and an additional container handling component are arranged inside of the external circumference of the apparatus support structure as defined by sections of the pipe or the profile frame which sections are located at outer sides of the apparatus support structure.

28. (New) Apparatus support structure according to claim 24, wherein individual sections in the pipe or the profile frame present blunt impact or mitered impact joining ends.

29. (New) Apparatus support structure according to claim 24, wherein at least some stars have individual drives accommodated in their support housings, the respective drive being one of an electrical servo motor or an electrical direct drive motors, and wherein control and supply strands leading to the individual drive are arranged in sections of the pipe or the profile frame.

30. (New) Apparatus support structure according to claim 24, wherein beneath the fixation plane of the pipe or the profile frame, on the bottom sides of the support housings, one of sprocket wheels, toothed wheels or belt toothed wheels are arranged and are connected via drive devices with a central drive system.

31. (New) Apparatus support structure according to claim 24, wherein a respective drive accommodated in one of the support housings is connected to drive strands placed in sections of the pipe or the profile frame.

32. (New) Apparatus support structure according to claim 24, wherein each support housing has a narrow upper part, tapering upwardly, and a broadened foot part, and is mounted with a foot part on a bottom support housing, located at the node of the pipe or profile frame, the bottom support housing having at least two section connecting interfaces, which are offset about an axis of the bottom support housing.